

Creates Campaign to Inform Service Members on Avenues to Address Retaliatory Actions After Reporting Sexual Harassment

Rochester, NY – Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28) today announced passage of the Slaughter Amendment to H.R. 4310, the National Defense Authorization Act. The Slaughter Amendment requires the Secretary of Defense to create an education campaign to notify members of the Armed Forces of their rights in addressing retaliatory personnel actions after reporting sexual harassment or assault. Current and former service members can access an existing body called the Board of Correction for Military Records (BCMR) to seek removal of notations placed in their permanent record, such as a negative evaluation, that service members believe were done in retaliation for a report of sexual assault or harassment. While 80 percent of petitioners in similar situations receive relief from a BCMR, only 1 in 5 individuals who could bring cases forward do so, indicating a lack of knowledge about the opportunity or a fear of taking advantage of it.

"Too often, members of our military have faced the fear of retaliation in reporting instances of sexual harassment or assault," said Slaughter. "These brave men and women, who serve our nation with honor and distinction, should not have to fear reprisal for reporting these heinous acts. My amendment will ensure that they are informed of the resources available and the processes in place to protect them from retaliatory personnel actions that result from them coming forward and reporting sexual harassment or abuse."

Slaughter has been a leading advocate for active military members and their families, as well as veterans of our armed forces. In addition to her extensive work on preventing and responding to sexual assault in the military, she has also led the fight for greater standards for body armor for active duty servicemen and women, supported legislation that provides quality affordable healthcare for veterans and fought for increased funding for programs that combat homelessness among veterans.

"The occurrence of sexual harassment and assault are blemishes on the proud and honorable tradition of our armed forces," said Slaughter. "This amendment goes a long way towards ensuring that those with the courage to seek redress have the information necessary to protect themselves against unwarranted, retaliatory personnel action. Much is asked of the men and women who dedicate themselves to the protection of our freedoms. We must continue to ensure that we earn that trust and dedication."

House Passes Slaughter Amendment

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